plots based on their seniority in the common priority list. Thus, the priority list was not disturbed.

Development of Maritime Industry

*389. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps proposed by Government to ensure that various hurdles are not put by the Mercantile Marine Department in discharging their duties;

(b) what specific objection Government have if Indian boat ship owners get their surveys done abroad at recognized shipyards;

(c) to what extent is the MMD harming the entrepreneurs; and

(d) the steps proposed to bring about reforms in this sector?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING , ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) With a view to ensuring efficiency and transparency of work and to enable the Mercantile Marine Department to play a facilitative role within the framework of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, the following steps have been taken by the Government:

(i) A Citizen Charter providing the details of various functions and target periods within which various services are to be rendered to the shipping industry without causing any inconvenience and delay has been made available at all Mercantile Marine Departments and on the website of Directorate General of Shipping.

(ii) A number of surveys and inspections have been assigned to recognized classification societies *vide* this Department's notification published in the Gazette of India-Extraordinary S.O. No. 640 (E) Dated 27th May, 2004.

(iii) A redressal mechanism has been set up to look into the genuine complaints of the shipping industry. The Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 has provisions for appeals by shipping compaines against unsatisfactory surveys and inspections. Such appeals can be made in the Indian ports as well as abroad.

(iv) With the introduction of an e-Governance programme for the Mercantile Marine Department, Mumbai, Directorate General of Shipping and allied offices, most of the Facilitative and regulatory approvals can be applied online by intending enterprises. Further, an online redressal system has also been introduced in order to reduce delays in the disposal of complaints.

(b) The Government have no objection to Indian ship-owners getting their ships surveyed abroad by the recognized classifiction societies.

(c) The objective of the Mercantile Marine Departments in terms of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 is to facilitate and encourage the entrepreneurs in the growth of the shipping industry and not to harm them.

(d) The following steps have been taken to bring in reforms in the sector.

(i) With a view to providing faster and efficient online delivery of services to the Shipping industry and networking of the whole of the Directorate and its allied offices with the shipping industries, an E-Governance programme has been jmplemented.

(ii) A new Regional Office of the Mercantile Marine Departments to be headed by principal Officer-cum-Joint Director General (Technical) has been opened at Kandla to cater to the interests of the Shipping Industry. The office of Mercantile Marine Departments at Kochi has been upgraded to the level of a Regional Office to be headed by a Principal Officer-cum-Joint Director General (Technical). Similarly, three more District Level Offices of the Mercantile Marine Departments to be headed by a Sureyor-in-charge have been opened at New Mangalore, Haldia and Paradip.

(iii) A Quality Management System for other functions of the organisation with the objective of providing quick and timely service to the shipping industry has been introduced in the Directorate General of Shipping.

(iv) The examination system of the Directorate General of Shipping has already been awarded the ISO certification.